TRANSCRIPT—LINDA J. "STONEE" FAULKNER

Interviewee: Linda J. Faulkner

Interviewer: Tealey Ellis and Judith Robertson

Interview Date: August 29, 2019

Location: Fairview Library

Length: 1 digital recording; 00: 31:27

Transcriber: Rev.com

Transcription Date: November 2, 2022

Abstract: Linda "Stonee" Faulkner discusses her family history, especially the Redman family line descending from Fairview settler Morgan Redman (circa 1793-1882), dating back to the 1800s.

TE: Okay. My name is Tealey Ellis, I am a volunteer with the Fairview Library Oral History Project. Today, August 29th, 2019, I am interviewing Linda Faulkner, sometimes known as Stonee, at the library. Thank you, Stonee, for your time and sharing your family history.

JR: This is Judith Robertson recording the oral history of Linda Faulkner, on August the 29th, 2019, at the Fairview Library, at 1:00PM. This is for the oral history project for the North Carolina Room at Pack Library, and the Buncombe County Library System. The conditions of use form for sound and video recordings has been signed by the interviewee.

TE: We're going to start, Stonee, with... Maybe I should call you Linda in this?

LJF: Okay.

TE: I will try. Let me just put it here in big letters, so I'll see.

So we're going to start with you, and work our way through to your grandfather and the beautiful house here he built in Fairview. So, if you could tell us where you were born and if you ever lived in Fairview?

LJF: I was born here in Asheville, North Carolina, at St. Joseph Hospital in 1951. And I was raised in Asheville on a farm in Haw Creek.

TE: Okay. And your mother, her name and where she was born?

LJF: My mother's name was Ruby Thomas Redman Faulkner, and she was born in her mother's boarding house on what was then North Main Street in Asheville, North Carolina.

TE: Okay.

LJF: She was born in 1907.

TE: Okay. Let's go to your grandfather, if you will share his name, and where he was born, when and where.

LJF: My grandfather was Thomas Brevard Redman. He was born January 6th, 1850, in Fairview.

TE: Wow, 1850.

LJF: Right?

TE: What was his occupation?

LJF: He had several occupations, probably. Men back then had a great range of skills and my grandfather was no different. His first profession was that of a farmer, and I found in the Gazetteer of Buncombe County, 1883 to 1884, that he owned 240 acres here in Fairview, back in that timeframe in the 1880s.

TE: Would that property have been where the house is built now, or is that different?

LJF: It would be the property where the house is now, and 240 acres around that house.

TE: Okay.

LJF: All the way over to the Davis Road area. But he also had other skills, and other occupations. He was also an equestrian, and a horse trainer. And one of the things that happened when his younger brother, Jim Redman, James Lafayette Redman, left Fairview in the 1880s, and moved out west to Colorado. Uncle Jim would send horses from the west back here to Asheville, ship them by train back to Asheville. And my grandfather would train them as saddle horses, or as carriage horses and would then sell them.

My grandfather was also a carpenter. He not only built the house here in Fairview that we're talking about today, he taught his younger brothers Jolie and Thaddeus Benjamin Redman, the skills of carpentry. And we see that in the census later on, that both of those men, as they grew up, claimed carpentry as their profession. And they learned that from my grandfather.

My grandfather was also a well-known stone mason in the Asheville area. When you look at the house here in Fairview, you see that the foundation is stone, huge cut stones. And there's two stone chimneys, one at each end of the house. He was the stone mason who built those chimneys.

TE: And did you say what year he built the house?

LJF: He built the house, we believe about 1884. Could have been started in 1883, but we know it was finished by February of 1885, because that was when he was married and the house was his honeymoon house. He built it for his honeymoon, for his wife.

TE: Nice.

LJF: Some of the other stone masonry work that he did in this area is still standing today. And one of those is the stone wall around what is now the Harris Teeter Grocery Store, on Merrimon Avenue in Asheville. But at the time he built that stone wall, it was known as Many Oaks, which was the estate of George Pack, for whom Pack Square is named, and Pack Library. So, my grandfather built that stone wall, and it's still standing today.

My grandfather also at some point, and I don't know the exact years, but he became a teacher at Weaverville College in Weaverville. And it operated from 1873 to 1934, but I'm assuming he was a teacher there in the 1870s. Maybe the late 1870s, when it was called Weaverville College. And that is where he met his wife to be.

TE: Oh, okay.

LJF: He saw her riding a big white horse, and she had long flowing hair, and she was galloping across a field and her hair was flowing behind her. And it is said through

family story that he fell in love with her while he was a teacher there, and she was apparently a student there. So, he later of course brought her back here to Fairview to live.

JR: Sounds like a fairytale.

TE: Yes. Yes, it does.

LJF: And then there was one other profession that he was involved in here in Fairview after he married his wife Frankie Cole, Frances Matilda Cole, of Weaverville area, Flat Creek area. They had a drover stand here at the house that is standing here in Fairview, you can see today. And the drover stand was where they would see the drovers driving their livestock down the road, like their turkeys, and their pigs. And because this house was built up on the hill-

JR: Oh, it was like a lookout.

LJF: A lookout. And Frankie Cole, from her kitchen garden right outside the house up on that hill, could look down the road and see the drovers coming from miles away apparently. And then could go prepare to flag them in, and have them stay there overnight. And they would feed the pigs the chestnuts that would grow in their great big chestnut trees. And then Frankie would cook meals for the drovers themselves.

TE: Do you think drovers would've been going in the direction to go through the gorge, Hickory Nut Gap Gorge?

LJF: Yes. Yes.

JR: Okay. And they'd come up the old Fairview Road, which was really kind of sunken down between... I mean it was cut into the mountain.

LJF: Yes.

JR: You had steep sides.

LJF: Yes.

JR: And so, you would have to be high up in order to see them coming.

LJF: Right. And that's exactly why I think he built that house where he built it.

JR: And he put the people up overnight, and the animals.

LJF: Yes.

TE: That's interesting.

JR: My word. Hard-working man.

LJF: So, he had multiple ways of earning money over his lifetime, and multiple skills.

TE: You mentioned the 200 some acres that he had, did he farm? And if so, any idea what kind of crops that he might have had?

LJF: Yes. His first profession was out of a farmer, and the one crop that I know that he raised was wheat. And the reason I know that is because my cousin, Louise Jenkins Ledwell, who was born in 1900 and died in 2000, her mother was Thomas Redman's younger sister. And she remembered when Thomas Brevard Redman would come in from the wheat fields covered in the wheat chaff, I guess you would call it. Because they

cut the wheat by hand back then, of course. And he would work from dawn until dusk, out in the fields. I imagine they also grew corn, and rye, and some other common crops around here.

TE: Any mention in records of people that he might have hired to work for him to harvest?

LJF: In those days the families were large, and they had lots of children to help with the farming. So, it's not clear to me that he ever had... Looking at the census, he did not have other people living in the house, other than his own children. So, I'm thinking that it was mainly a family farm.

TE: Okay. When he decided to build this house in Fairview that we've been discussing, do you know, is there any record of how he chose that spot?

LJF: I can only imagine he chose the hilltop position so that they could see the drovers coming down. It was a beautiful view, and it worked out financially as well.

TE: Right. Interesting.

LJF: And there was a spring nearby. If you look at the property today, there's a lake on it. I don't believe that there was a lake on it when he owned the property, I believe it was dammed many years later. But obviously you would want to be near water in those days. So, he would've built the house near a spring.

TE: So, he designed the house, is that correct?

LJF: He designed the house and built the house himself. And he apparently, when you look at pictures of... I have a picture of his father's house, and you can see that they are the same style. It's a wood frame house with stone foundation, and on each end are two stone chimneys. They're both two-story houses. I would imagine that back in that day they had wood shingles for the roof.

TE: In all the records that you seem to have very plentiful, is there anything about the cost of building that house? But supplies, I guess either cut down trees, or some supplies had to be bought?

LJF: I would imagine. I don't have any records on that, but I would imagine he had to have the lumber milled. He would've had to have bought the nails. He probably bought the glass for the windows. But otherwise, the labor was his own, and he enlisted the help of his younger brothers to help build the house.

TE: Okay. All right. Nice to have a big family, isn't it? I don't know if it works that way today or not. And again, I know you talked about it a little while ago, but maybe this is a good spot to give that estimate again of about how long to complete construction? To your knowledge, or guesstimates.

LJF: Oh, okay. I don't know when he started the house, but we're assuming that he built the house around 1883, 1884. Because he built the house as his honeymoon house for his wedding. And he was married on February 15th, 1885. So, we know the house was finished by his wedding date, so I'm assuming he probably finished it up in late 1884.

TE: Okay. How long did he live in that house, do you know?

LJF: He lived in that house until 1895.

TE: And where did he go after that?

LJF: The first five children in his family were born in that house in '86, '87, '88, 1890 and 1892. And when the family moved, they moved to Flat Creek, North Carolina, which is up near Weaverville. Because it appears that he stayed here in Fairview until his mother died. And let's see, I believe she died around 1894. I believe it was June of 1894. And his wife then wanted to live closer to her mother, who lived out in the Coles Cove area of Flat Creek. So, the entire family then moved to Flat Creek.

TE: And according to your records, when he died, was he living in Flat Creek?

LJF: No, they lived in Flat Creek until 1905. Both of my grandparents were very insistent that their children have a good education. I guess in part because my grandfather had been a teacher at Weaver College, and his wife had attended Weaver College. They wanted their children to be well educated. While they lived in Flat Creek, they actually built the one-room schoolhouse that served not only their family but the community.

And as their children grew older, and I guess grew beyond the grade level that was available, he sent the eldest two daughters into Asheville. To the Asheville Normal and Collegiate Institute, which was located where Mission Hospital's located today. But because he had 11 children, they wanted them all educated. That wasn't going to be feasible to educate all of them that way. So, the family ended up in 1905 moving to Asheville, in order to take advantage of the Asheville City School system for the rest of the children.

TE: Well, that was good reasoning and thinking, wasn't it? It sounded like he was very innovative and creative in his thinking about things, and how to solve problems. Problem-solving guy.

LJF: Yes.

JR: Very practical.

TE: Very practical. Yes, indeed. Do you know from records of this property who he sold that property to?

LJF: I don't know that, it would probably be in the Buncombe County deeds, but I have not looked that up. It would appear from the census that he may have let his younger sister, Harriet Redman, whose name was Hattie, move into that house after he left and moved to Flat Creek.

TE: Okay. All right. So, your Redman family settled in Fairview pretty early, and I believe that would've been your great-grandfather, if you could tell us about him?

LJF: My great-grandfather was Peter A. Redman. He was born on January 24th, 1816 in Fairview. And he died May 24th, 1884 in Fairview. And he's buried here in the Cane Creek Cemetery.

TE: Okay. Any records or ideas of where he lived?

LJF: Yes. He owned property right there near where Davis Road is today. So, he owned, I would think, several hundred acres there. And he owned a house that looked very much like the house my grandfather built, and he was a farmer all of his life.

TE: And then take us back to your great-great grandfather, so that we know when your family started living in this area.

LJF: Sure. My great-great grandfather was Morgan Redman, and he was married to Susanna Pressley Redman. Morgan Redman was born about 1793, and died here in Fairview in 1882. His farm, we believe, was located about where Reynolds High School is today. And so, he owned a fair size farm. He was a farmer all his life. And I have the estate records of Morgan Redman, and then of his son Peter Redman, who was my great-grandfather.

TE: It's hard when you get to all those G's in there, isn't it? Trying to get it all straightened out. I just noticed that I failed in going back through time and history that we need to bring your mother into this, my error. I apologize.

LJF: Okay. My mother was Ruby Redman Faulkner, and she was born January 22nd, 1907 in her mother's boarding house in Asheville, which was located on what was then called North Main Street, later Broadway. Still today is Broadway.

TE: Do we know what that boarding house name was?

LJF: It didn't have a name.

TE: It didn't have a name, okay.

LJF: But I have a picture of it. It was just a big white wooden house.

JR: Do you know what's in that place now?

LJF: That is where the Reed Creek Greenway is now.

JR: Oh, okay. Yes.

LJF: They widened the road.

JR: So that's down near UNCA.

LJF: Yes. They widened the road, and basically took up a lot of the area. Their house was built right on that creek, because they had livestock when they moved in. They had mules, and horses, and cows, there in Asheville. They didn't just buy a homesite, they bought kind of like a mini farm.

JR: It would've been, in the country.

LJF: Yeah. Yeah.

TE: So, your mother then never lived in Fairview either, is that correct?

LJF: She did not. She was born and raised in Asheville and she lived there all her life.

TE: Okay. All right. To your knowledge, are there any Redman ancestors, or descendants rather, I guess I should say, living in Fairview today? From these gentlemen, Morgan, Peter, and Thomas?

LJF: There are probably some by other names. I'm certain that for instance, his sister Susan, when she married Columbus Jenkins, who was the first postmaster here in Fairview. I'm pretty sure that they have descendants living in this area still today.

TE: Okay. If you know what the plans are for your grandfather's former property that was recently sold, do you know what the plans are for that?

LJF: I really don't. It was sold as a commercial property. I saw in the MLS where it was the house was considered of no value. I presume they're going to tear down the house.

JR: Aye yai yai.

TE: That is a shame.

LJF: I don't know, because I don't know who the owners are. But I believe it's going to become a housing development, or apartment complex, or something residential, I believe.

JR: It's such a beautiful house.

TE: It is such a beautiful house, and I've only ever seen when in the winter, when all the leaves are gone, kind of the front of the house. But seeing the back of the house today in the picture that you provided, it just looks beautiful. It's just such a shame-

JR: It's such a gracious, fun, house.

TE: Yes. And to think that... If it is a development... I mean I know this is off record here just a little bit, but if it is a development, it seems to me, depending on what kind of development it's going to be. What a grand thing to maybe do a little restoration and use that house as something, a little meeting place or whatever.

LJF: I think that would be awesome, if they would do that.

JR: They probably wouldn't.

TE: They probably wouldn't, but it would be such a great way to maintain some history of Fairview.

LJF: I do have a couple of stories that my mother passed down to me.

TE: That's where I was going next, so please share those.

LJF: Okay. I think I failed to mention that my great-grandfather, Peter Redman, fought in the Civil War for the Confederate army. And he left for the war when my grandfather was only about 12 years old. So, my grandfather, Thomas Brevard Redman had to take over as basically man of the house, and managing the farm at 12 years old. He took on a great deal of responsibility at a very young age, while his father was gone to war.

And one of the stories that was passed down to me through my cousin Louise Jenkins Ledwell, was that during the Civil War, when the Union troops came through here, they were just stealing everything they could get their hands on. And so, my grandfather knew that he had to protect the family's assets to the best of his ability at 12 years old, 12, 13 years old. And apparently the family had a mule that they used in farming, and he did not want that mule to be stolen as it was part of their means of supporting themselves. So, he took that mule way up to the high rock cliffs on the top of the mountain here in Fairview, and he pinned that mule up there near the top, and brought some water and feed to help ensure that the Yankees, the Union troops, could not find and steal their family asset.

TE: What a bright young lad.

LJF: There also, later on in his life... This was actually not a story passed down to me, it was something I found in the Cane Creek Baptist Church records. That family, the Peter

Redman family and the Thomas Brevard Redman family, were all members of the Cane Creek Baptist Church here. And in the records there around the 1870s, there is mention of Thomas Brevard Redman holding a corn shucking on his farm. So, they invited neighbors from all over for this corn shucking. And apparently someone at that corn shucking reported back to the Cane Creek Baptist Church that my grandfather Thomas Brevard Redman had been seen drinking liquor. And so, the church leaders called him into account for this, and he told the truth and he admitted, and I will quote, that "I did, hail first to the still." So, I found that quote to be rather humorous, and I was able to tell my mother that about her father.

TE: That is precious.

JR: I wonder what the punishment was.

LJF: He was called in to have a meeting, to be ministered to, by one of the head ministers of, or deacons of the church list.

TE: So, he was not disfellowshipped.

LJF: He was not churched, as they would say. He was not thrown out. He was ministered to, to get him back on the straight and narrow.

JR: Like a Dutch uncle, giving you this word.

LJF: But they did... When the family moved to Flat Creek over near Weaverville, the Cane Creek Baptist Church did give him the letter that the Baptist churches would pass back and forth, that he was a member in good standing. So, we know he was a member in good standing by the 1890s when he moved.

There's another story about the house, what I refer to as the honeymoon house, here in Fairview, that he built. That when he married his wife, Frankie Cole, Frances Matilda Cole, her mother Polly Cole wanted to make sure that she was an independent woman of means. And so, for a wedding present, her mother gave her a horse and buggy, which was of no small expense in those days. So that should she ever want to just leave and drive from Fairview all the way out to Weaverville and Flat Creek, she could do that on her own. And then she remained a fairly independent woman all her life.

TE: Good for her.

JR: That's an unusual story.

TE: It is.

LJF: There is another story that was passed down to me of when Frankie and Thomas first married, and he had built this house for the marriage. After they were married and they came to live at the house here in Fairview, she discovered he had built those large fireplaces, but he had intended for her to cook over the fire. Apparently, that's the way his mother cooked. Well, Frankie did not cook that way, she was used to a wood stove. And she, according to family story, told him that she would not cook for him until he put in a wood stove. And so, he then had to make that addition to the house.

TE: I bet he got on that quickly.

LJF: I think he must have. And she cooked on a wood stove for the rest of her life, and when they moved to Flat Creek, when they moved into Asheville. She didn't die until, let's see, 1949. And she used a wood stove only throughout her life.

JR: But now, that house originally didn't have plumbing or electricity. I wonder-

LJF: Correct.

JR: ...if she got used to plumbing and electricity as time went on.

LJF: I think she did, yes. They did have indoor plumbing in Asheville, and they did have electricity, but she would not give up her wood stove.

TE: Those fireplaces must have been pretty deep.

LJF: They must have been.

TE: Large and deep to cook.

LJF: And then there's one more story that I don't believe I've told, and that is about the honeymoon house being used as a drover stand. Maybe I did go over that.

JR: Yes, you did.

TE: You did.

LJF: Okay. So, they would bring in the drovers--

JR: Put the people up. But what did they do with all their children? They already had a house full of children, and here they're adding all these other people to the house.

LJF: Well, I'm not sure if the drovers stayed inside the house.

JR: Okay.

LJF: I think drovers probably slept outside--

JR: In the barn.

LJF: Outside in the shed, or in the barn. Sure.

JR: That's right, they would have.

LJF: They weren't like guests in the house.

JR: Exactly.

LJF: Drovers were different from guests in the house.

JR: That's a good point.

TE: And was there any charge for food?

LJF: I'm sure they paid a fee for their meal, and the fee for the chestnuts and whatever other feed was fed to the animals. Yes. That's how my grandfather and grandmother made some extra money.

TE: Just wanted to put that out there.

JR: It's a good thing the pigs like those chestnuts, because there's not a whole lot else you can do with them.

TE: Most interesting, to say the least.

JR: Yes, very.

TE: Very interesting family. And they were here early. And I'm sure as you said, there possibly are some descendants, and I hope some of those stories have been... That they've

heard some of those, and maybe passing them on. Your research has been extensive, obviously. You've spent a lot of time on this, and we really appreciate your sharing it with us today.

LJF: You're very welcome.

TE: Because it adds another interest. Because there are a lot of people that have grown accustomed for many years to seeing that house there.

LJF: I know.

TE: And so, when people access the records in Pack, this is going to hit home with them. So, we really appreciate your sharing that today. Judith, do you have any questions?

JR: I just have to say, you're a good storyteller.

TE: Absolutely a good storyteller.

JR: It's great that you're very generous to share all of this with us. Thank you.

LJF: It's my pleasure.

TE: And just an off the beat question, how many years do you think it's taken you to get all of this information? Plus, I know you have a whole lot more that doesn't really pertain, but.

LJF: I started in the 1990s. I just got the bug for genealogy, and started learning more about the family history, and was able, fortunately, to talk to my Aunt Jo-Ben Redman,

who was a little older than my mother. And was able to do some research, and also talked to Louise Jenkins Ledwell, who lived here in Fairview almost a hundred years.

TE: Wow.

LJF: She was an excellent source of information about our family.

TE: What is your occupation?

LJF: I have been a number... Just like my grandfather had a number of skills. My first profession was as a graphic artist. I earned a PhD in instructional systems technology from Indiana University. And so, I worked in what would be called corporate training and development for most of my career. And I've also been in real estate, I have been a manager of tech writers. I've done a number of things.

TE: It certainly sounds that way. And your grandfather would be proud of you, I'm sure.

LJF: Thank you.

TE: For exploring what's available to you now, as he explored what was available to him during that time. So again, thank you so much for sharing this information with us today.

END OF INTERVIEW.